

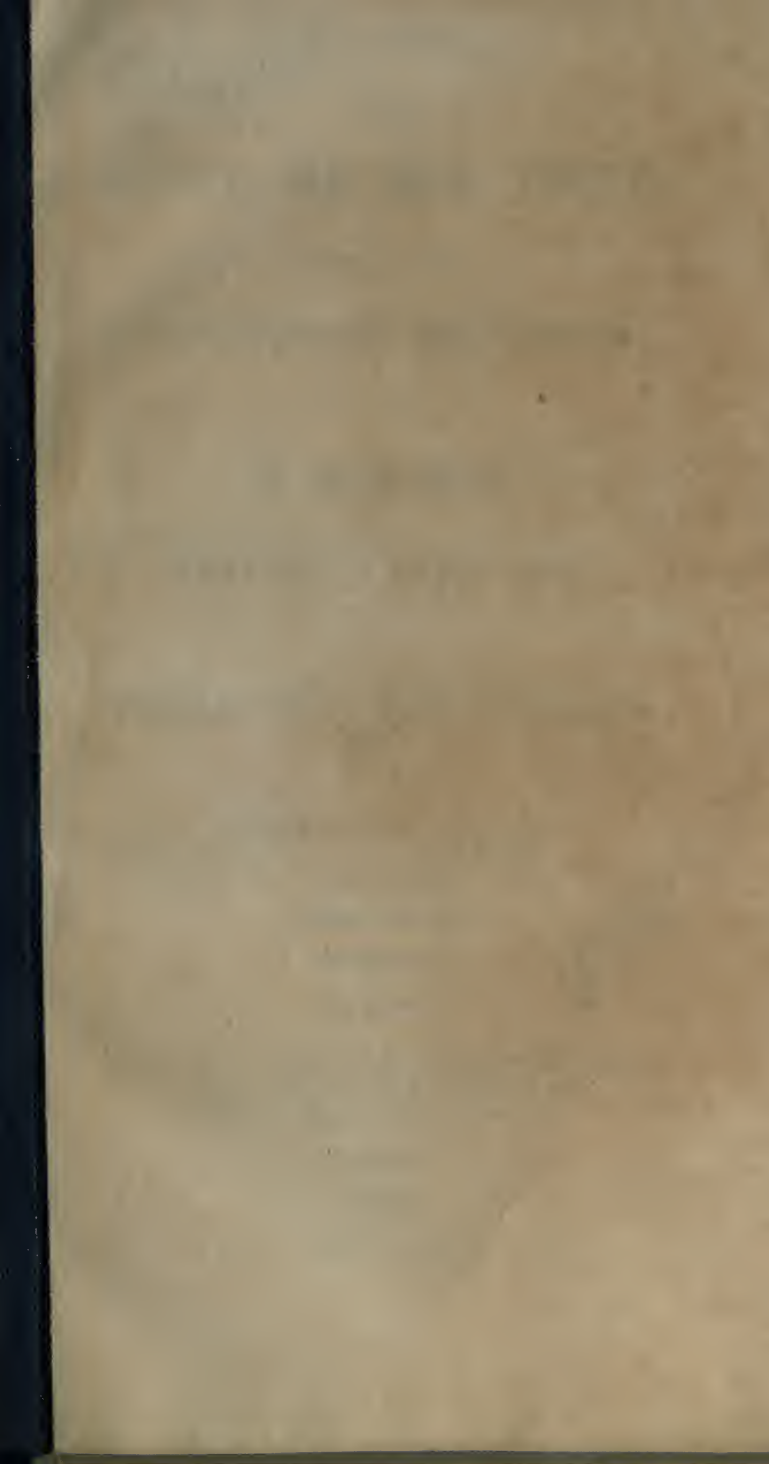
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[Dunn, William]

The soul of Mr.Pitt.

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[Dunn, William]

THE

SOUL OF MR. PITT;

DEVELOPING THAT

EIGHTEEN MILLIONS

OF

T A X E S

MAY BE TAKEN OFF,

AND THE

THREE PER CENT. CONSOLS

BE

CONSTANTLY ABOVE 100.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

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NOTICE

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL

THE
SOUL OF MR. PITT.

IT was observed in a Morning Paper, "The Plan of Debentures unfolds the Soul of Mr. Pitt:"———the *truth* of the remark may certainly be doubted; yet as it becomes those who have derived *advantages* either from the Living or the Dead, gratefully to acknowledge the *Source* from whence they have been received, I shall not object to this tribute.

The Plan is as follows :

"Every Proprietor of the Funded Capital shall have the liberty of claiming any part of it in transferrable Debentures of One Hundred Pounds Stock or upwards———these Debentures to be re-transferrable into Stock; and the Interest, when received, to be written off the back of each, in the manner of India Bonds."

Mr. Vansittart observed in the House of Commons—(see Times April 10, 1818,)

"If at the time when Funded Property was first introduced, a
"Paper Currency had been established on it———one
"might have possessed a Banking System as perfect as any
"thing of this nature could be made."

To *common apprehension*, the only difference the Plan would create would be, that a person could, if he pleased, carry his Stock in his Pocket———instead of having it locked up in the Bank of England.

"The Dividends due on the Stock Debentures will be receivable by the Bearer.

"If Stock is exchanged for Debentures, it is the same as if that Stock had been sold.

"The Dividends due on Debentures must be received before they can be re-converted into Stock.

"Each Debenture will have a Ledger Account in the Bank Books, and a Dividend Warrant will be prepared in the usual way.

"The means to detect Forgeries (by a peculiar invention) will be equally effective in every part of the United Kingdom, and in our most distant Colonies."

It is obvious that the Funded Debt of this Country has risen to its present enormous amount by the succession of Loans; and upon examination it will be found, that my Plan proposes a **NEW BASIS** of *Public Credit*. Thus: A Loan to the Government is———
A *part* of the Individuals lend to the *whole* of the Individuals.——
The Loan itself neither increases nor diminishes the riches of the

Country, but it occasions a *Destruction of Capital* to the amount borrowed; as the *uses* of that capital are thereby annihilated.—“The Chief Justice of Ely says in his Notes on Blackstone’s Commentaries, B. 1. C. 8.

“The *Principal* of the Debt is the exact amount of the Property which the Nation has lost from its Capital for ever ———the American War cost the Nation 116 Millions Sterling, and the effect is *precisely* the same as if so much of its wealth had been thrown into the Sea.”

——But by giving the Stockholder the permissive faculty of holding Debentures, Funded Property will be *so far* restored to useful employment; or, in the language of Political Economy, it will be reproductively consumed, instead of unproductively. It is overwhelming to the Country to exact from the proceeds of Industry Forty-four Millions of Interest, when the Capital itself is unemployed and out of circulation. What practical ill effect *could* be produced by a Commercial Gentleman, who holds 3,300*l.* Three per Cent. Consols, changing Thirteen Hundred of them into Two Five Hundreds and Three single Hundreds Stock Debentures; and thereby possessing the means at any moment of raising Money by Sale or Loan in every part of the United Kingdom?

Mr. Vansittart observed in the House of Commons——(see Morning Chronicle, April 10, 1818, Chancellor of the Exchequer’s Speech:)

“He had some communications with Mr. Dunn, and without meaning to say that no case could arise in which it might not be expedient to convert the Capital of our debt into a floating Security, he did object to the adoption of Mr. Dunn’s Plan at present—because he conceived that while there were *so many* Exchequer Bills in the Market; either those Bills, or the proposed Debentures, must fall in value.”

As therefore the Chancellor of the Exchequer considered the present Floating Debt as the *sole* obstacle to his adoption of my Plan, it is necessary I should state the Arguments I have since used with him to induce his relinquishment of that Denomination of the circulating medium. My apparent success with him, as evidenced by his having lately greatly reduced the amount of Exchequer Bills, induces me to hope I may so prevail, as to remove *entirely* this sole impediment to his full approbation.

A more safe, legal, and ultimately a more profitable Species of Security, may be founded on Stock Debentures; and I therefore unequivocally assert that an Unfunded Debt in time of Peace is Unconstitutional. It is an expedient, authorised only by great exigencies during *War*.—Exchequer Bills are *then* issued in *anticipation* of Revenue; and *this* is their restricted and *avowed* object. They are Government Promises or Drafts on futurity, and are of a nature similar to what are called Accommodation Bills in Trade (the usual resort of the insolvent). How can Parliament take accurate cognisance of the continual alteration in the amount of these Bills; which are liable to a variation of Interest, and are sometimes paid into the Customs, sometimes demanded in Cash, and sometimes annihilated by being neglected on the day they are renewable? It would require the skill of one of the Clerks of

the Clearing-House to detect Fraud in such accounts, and which, in the case of Mr. Aslett, even eluded the vigilance of the Cashiers of the Bank of England. The House of Commons cannot therefore flatter themselves that *they* are adequate to check these intricacies.

The tenor likewise of Exchequer Bills, forms a dangerous claim to admit against the Government, as they are payable after a short period into the Customs, or demandable in Cash; and thereby each Bill has the power of a Judgment Creditor; which accounts for the low rate of Interest at which they are issued.

A few years since, this demand was so insolently maintained, that it caused a fall in the Stocks of near 12 per cent.; and the Executive Government ought to use every effort to get rid of the Unfunded Debt, and place it where it will cease to torment with its incessant and petulant demand. The House of Commons therefore cannot, consistently with their Trust, as Auditors of the Public Accounts, refuse to order that the alarming Claims of the unfunded Creditor be collected together; the Amount funded, and the Interest provided for out of the Consolidated Fund.

Mr. Nesbitt declares, that the desideratum of all parties, is an increase of National Capital: he says,

—“That *this* would be the greatest possible benefit to Society under existing circumstances,” and, “that he who can show

“how the National Currency is to be increased by *any means*, will have discovered a Financial Arcanum!”

This, I humbly conceive, is realised in the Plan of Stock Debentures. — The Funded Capital at present is totally unproductive, and is characterised as the national Burthen — but give to it a thing Utility, and you give it Value, — you make a Product of it, — that is, — you create Wealth.

But it has been alleged, that the *large* Amount of the National Debt being rendered convertible into transferrable Debentures, would cause *too great* a Circulation of Paper. I answer, that this concession to the Funded Proprietor, made for the *public* benefit, need not be extended to a *greater degree* than it proves to be conducive to *that* end, and any excess would present a fair subject for Taxation, and a great means of assisting the Revenue.

If the Receipts given by the holder of a Debenture, on the payment of his Dividends, were subject to a Stamp-duty, the Amount of that Stamp might be so regulated as to produce the exact Issue of Stock Debentures, that was found proportional to the requirements of Commerce and Agriculture: but the greater part of the National Debt cannot be so converted, as it consists of *Stock*, subjected to various purposes, and which can only be transferred for the limited and specified uses directed by the Testators, and Deeds of Settlements.

The National Debt, in a sense, consists of Annuity Bonds, redeemable only at the option of the Obligor, and the Annuity is secured by the Annual Taxes; the Plan of Debentures concedes *only* a facility of Transfer to the Public Creditor; that is, it makes these Bonds transferrable to the Bearer.

Does not this Plan therefore supply the desideratum of Mr. Huskisson; — who says, — “No circulation could be sound and

Safe, unless it was precisely such as would have existed, if the Currency was all Metallic; for it never was believed by the most ignorant, that the Funds were a deposit of Gold in the Bank.

The Public Debt is the Amount of *Annuities* due to the Public Creditor; and the Individual Annuitant possessing a transferrable Security, whereby his Claim is ascertained, does not *decide* whether he shall be paid that Annuity in Gold, or in Bank Notes. *This* is an indifferent question, and must refer to the *existing* circulating medium in the same manner as if the payment was made by a private person. The means which Government possess to satisfy the Public Annuitant, arise from the receipt of the Taxes which are levied respectively for each *specified* Fund; and whether the Government receive the amount of the Taxes in Gold or in Bank Notes, (whatever the circulating medium may be,) *such* as they receive they hand over to the Public Annuitant; and certain Taxes may be denominated the Mortgage Property of particular Individuals, as much as certain Rents of Lands are the property of the present proprietors. Judge Blackstone says, Book i. Chap. 8.

"The property of a Creditor of the Public consists in a certain portion of the National Taxes."

The opponents therefore of the Paper System will find their Portfolio of Arguments totally inapplicable to the Plan of Stock Debentures;— they dare not assimilate them to a Paper Currency;— they are too just and too wise to do this, as they cannot even be denominated an *extension* of the Funding System, or in the most remote degree, the CREATION of a fictitious Capital. But, on the contrary,—"The desideratum of the Bullionists" is presented to them, and their uttermost wishes accomplished by this measure,— for — Stock Debentures will be *Supremely, The Representatives of Real Property*, for which all the Wealth of the Country stands pledged! Blackstone says, Book i. Chap. 8.

The Land, the Trade, and the PERSONAL INDUSTRY of the Subject, are pawned for the Security of the Debt. The Title of the Landed Proprietor and that of the Stock-holder is *precisely the same*.— The power possessed by the Executive is delegated to them by the Legislature, *equally* to support both, — and the Army and Navy, in fact, — exist for no other purpose.

It is not (it is presumed) to be apprehended that the Bullionists mean to contend that Faith is not to be kept with the Public Creditor. *If so*,— a more extensive Question will be propounded by the Stock-holder, viz. Is the present general distribution of *Landed Property* to be preserved?

This facility of Transfer given by Debentures, is a Concession of very small moment in itself; and on the morning when such a privilege was granted to the Stock-holder, it would hardly be noticed as a political circumstance, but by "Men of Mind."— A public writer lately observed, "We cannot see in what way the issue of Stock Debentures would increase the Circulating Medium:" in fact, the Public Creditor would merely become the tangible possessor of a Security, to which he before had an exclusive and undoubted title.

But it may be objected, that the transposition of inactive Capital to the purposes of Trade, &c. may possibly cause a rise in the price of CORN: I reply, that the present Members of the House of Commons, whether they are the Representatives of the Proprietors of Boroughs, or the choice of the great Towns and Counties, form *collectively* the wisest Assembly in the world; (this is a fact which none but a Frenchman will deny,) and it would be insulting their Councils and Integrity, to suppose that they will not with scrupulous jealousy watch over the welfare of the Country in this respect. To guard against the undue influence of Capital, we have at present Laws against Monopolisers; and the wisdom of our Legislature could easily induce the application of additional Capital to National improvements, and the production of Articles of the first necessity.

The cultivation of the Waste Lands would increase the growth of Corn: this increase would produce Cheapness; and the price of every article of life depends on the price of Corn: the power of enforcing Regulations is even delegated by the Legislature to the Executive during the recess of Parliament, and Capital might be so temporised, as to be made to minister to the *exact* requirement of the Country. An increase of the Stamp-duty, payable on the Dividend Receipts, would ensure a diminution of the number of Debentures in circulation, and our Colonies, delightfully scattered through every Climate, and inhabited by our nearest relatives, have a *large* demand upon us for an increase of Capital. Many a fertile Acre is there offering, unseen, its exotic beauties, and wasting its fertility, while the Inhabitants of the Parent Country are piled together in diseased Cities, and consumed by febrile contagion.——Does any one assert that there are no openings for the employment of additional Capital, by directing Emigration to our own Colonies, (the legitimate offspring of the Mother Country)? Have THEY not a real claim to participate in a Parent's Wealth? Cannot Government, by scattering that stagnant Pool of Putrefaction, the National Debt, into various channels, (as if by the refinements of irrigation,) make that slough of despondency a source from whence *comfort* and *fertility* will be diffused to the most remote part of the British Empire? The Capitalist can do what the Government of the Country, with Six Hundred inactive Ships, dares not attempt! Individual offers of advantage may induce the allowed Pauper to forsake his Cellar or Hovel, and his Potatoes and Tea, for a "Land of Vineyards and Streams of Water," where Competence will be a necessary consequence of Industrious habits!

Science likewise unfolds many dark leaves which an increase of Capital might illumine; and let it be remembered, in reference to the fears of excessive capital, that Stock Debentures will be in fact no more than the REPRESENTATION of *so much* of the present Funded Property, which, however disposed of, will be of *no more* value than the Stock itself, with the added advantage of its transferrable quality.——The Amount of Stock due to the Public Creditor is precisely the same, whether it remains as Inscriptions in the "Great Book," or in the form of Stock Debentures, which will be (to use the explanation of Dr. Johnson) merely the *Instruments* whereby a claim is demandable.

By the present practice, a London Banker possessing five hundred thousand pounds Stock, can hardly avail himself of the use of it after half past two, although he is obliged to pay every claim until five o'clock every day; and a Banker of Glasgow cannot transfer his Stock, except he gives his personal attendance in London, or executes a power of attorney, whereby he ceases to have the control of his own property. But by the issue of Stock Debentures,——the Bankers of the United Kingdom would possess a Security, transferable in *every place*, and at all times, without the creation of a fictitious capital, and without any compulsory acts to oblige its circulation. Capital can thus be supplied to the extent that may be wanted, without the disadvantage of *forcing* the introduction of Paper, but by merely *giving the power* of making it subservient to the exigencies of the Kingdom. But it will in fact be dissimilar to a paper circulation, as each Debenture will represent a Certificate of Substantial Property, for which every acre of Land in the United Kingdom stands pledged.

Every Proprietor would thus possess at all times a Security on which he could raise Money; and the Bankers need not be any longer subject to the loss of Interest arising from their keeping a *floating Capital*, as they would always hold an *available Property* in case of any sudden run upon them; and the present necessity of locking up the Funded Capital for a third of a year, (during the preparation for the dividends) and the long attendance required to transfer Stock, would be avoided.

Persons of Financial Experience will easily perceive the beneficial effects that would be produced in the Money Market by the facility which this plan would give to the procuring Loans on Stock, at any hour of the Day, and in every part of the United Kingdom. A Million of Money might be borrowed on Debentures in Lombard Street, when the lateness of the hour, and the inconvenience of transfer, would preclude the possibility of borrowing 1000*l.* on Stock.

The National Debt would (in effect) be virtually changed into a circulating Medium, transferrable in every Country, and answering the most desirable Uses in those places where Barter now only exists. The relief that would be instantly afforded to our Colonies, where an article of merchandise sometimes passes through three hands in the course of the day, for *want* of a circulating Medium, will be fully appreciated by those interested in their welfare, and who may often have witnessed this circumstance.

It is within the compass of the Wisdom that *should* direct his Majesty's Councils, to point out a method whereby an accredited deposit of Debentures being made with the Governors of our Colonies, a remittance might be afforded of the Dividends certified to be due thereon; by which means the circulating medium of that Colony might be increased proportionably to the requirements of its Trade and domestic policy.

It would be highly culpable in any Minister to permit a systematical expenditure which regularly exceeded the annual income of the Country. It would be insulting to the understanding to say that *this* would be any thing else than a direct attack on the Sinking Fund, which in its constitution is considered as a *surplus*

of income. The borrowing money on Stock, and then purchasing back the Stock with the money so borrowed, would speedily and *infallibly* lead to the most ruinous consequences.

The Sinking Fund has been characterised as the Sheet Anchor of the Funded Proprietor; but it is a benefit which he would *gladly* relinquish for the superior advantage of a transferrable security.

I state it as a fact, admitted by all well-informed practical men, that by my Plan the 3 Per Cent. Consols would be stately above 100—but the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt could not purchase that Stock at 101, for which they might *compel* the Stock-Holder to take 100; as all the Funds are redeemable at Par.

It is obvious, that Stock Debentures would prevail where the nature of the Funded Property was not in the least understood; and such would be the demand from distant parts for these Securities bearing Interest, and yet possessing the transferrable Nature of Bank Notes, that the price I have mentioned would certainly be realised.——Stock Debentures would be viewed as an Article of Commerce, and prove in a complete degree the desideratum in our exchanges! and our Colonies, likewise, would be furnished with a medium that would be as beneficial to them as to the Mother Country.

These advantages possessed by Stock Debentures, when they are contrasted with the present injudicious form of “Inscriptions in the Bank Books,” would evidently authorise the expectation that money would be procured by the Government at 2½ per cent.

I shall not *indulge* myself with reflections on a higher price, but it is obvious that the Navy 5 per Cents. have not been circumscribed to 100, although they are redeemable at that price. I ask, then, under *these* circumstances, Would it be advisable to reduce, by the purchases of the Commissioners, that Capital which *thus* ministered to the comfort of the aged Annuitant in the remote parts of the realm—which was incorporated with Commerce in general, which was dispersed with British Subjects in our distant Colonies, and which formed a constituent and eligible part of the Circulating Medium of Great Britain and all her dependencies? Would it not be destructive to the national welfare to oblige the Public Creditor to receive back his Capital, and thereby annihilate——that which would be essential to his support, and to the support of the EMPIRE at large?

If the Sinking Fund, however, was still persevered in, notwithstanding the price was 100, and the Commissioners decided by Lot in respect to the Individuals who should be *compelled* to receive back their Principal;——the inevitable result would be, that Remonstrances would so prevail, that the Sinking Fund of Fourteen Millions per Annum *must* be ultimately appropriated to the Service of the Year, which, with Four Millions saved by the consequent reduction of the 4 and 5 per Cents., establishes the *triumphant* conclusion, that Eighteen Millions of Taxes *must* be taken off; and yet the Stocks would receive a *greater* support, than if the Sinking Fund had been increased to three times its present amount!

Let me represent to my Eighteen Millions of Countrymen the *practical* nature of the good they are to receive in the reduction of the following Taxes:

Duty on Salt	£1,500,000
Coals	1,000,000
Tea	1,500,000
Coffee	150,000
Sugar	2,000,000
Beer	3,000,000
Malt	1,500,000
Hops	100,000
Candles	300,000
Soap	500,000
Iron	300,000
Paper used for Printing	350,000
Tobacco (to induce its Culture in England)	1,000,000
The Window Lights	2,500,000
Stamps on Newspapers	300,000
Proceedings in Courts of Justice	2,000,000
	<hr/>
	£18,000,000

Thus, through the simple expedient of permitting a man who may have Three Hundred Consols to possess One Hundred of them in a transferrable Debenture,——will these mighty results be realised.

Nor would the Landed Interest be less benefited. An Agricultural writer represents, that the Country Bankers have rendered themselves the possessors of most of the Title Deeds in the country, and that the Proprietors are paying at the rate of Ten and Twelve per cent. interest, in the shape of Annuities, for Money borrowed upon the security of their Estates.

From what has been advanced the Landed Proprietor must be satisfied that Money would be easily procured at three per cent. through the issue of Stock Debentures, and *then* the Annuitant and Mortgagee will comply with a ratio of interest proportional to the price of Corn; as the Wisdom of our Legislature has provided “the equity of redemption” in both instances. The difference in the rate of interest chargeable upon Estates would be applied by the Proprietors to the improvement of the Land; and Activity would thereby prevail in the Farming districts as well as in the manufacturing Countries, and the Poor’s Rates would consequently diminish.

It has been suggested, that the liability of the Stocks to great fluctuations, would expose the holders of Debentures to occasional losses.——I answer, that the price of the Funds has sometimes not varied Two Shillings and Sixpence per cent. during a whole Month; and if the holder of a Debenture could borrow Money by depositing it, and is not driven by necessity to sell it at an unfavorable moment, he would in fact be neither richer nor poorer by any fluctuation——his Property, which may be three pounds per annum, would remain invariably the same under all the vicissitudes of War or Peace.

The Cotton and Russia Markets have been the subjects of much greater fluctuations than the Stock Market, and the price of Corn has varied nearly Seventy-five per cent !

But it has been suggested that Stock Debentures would supersede Bank Notes.——I answer, that, on the contrary, they would be found rather to cause their increase.——No Stock Debenture would be issued for less than One Hundred Pounds.——Bank Notes (as the legal tender) would be the criterion of the value of Debentures ; and, from the vast traffic that would take place in their purchase and sale——*this* medium of their exchange would be increased : for the wisdom of this age has at last discovered that a Circulating Medium is a RESULT, and not a CAUSE, arising out of the commercial transactions of Society. The withdrawing any Bank Notes from circulation can only arise from the Bank having their Capital returned to them by the Government, or by their refusing to discount or lend Money.

It has been objected, that the Provincial Towns situate at a distance from the Metropolis would be under a disadvantage with regard to the means of disposing of their Stock, or rather Debentures, in case of any sudden disastrous National event.——This is an error : but admitting it was so, it cannot be remedied with regard to Stock.——But it is obvious that a Gentleman at Liverpool can, with greater ease, dispose of a *transferrable* property, such as Debentures, than undergo the lengthened process of soliciting a friend in London——to become his Attorney, and to employ a Broker to sell Stock, for the time that a power of Attorney can be procured and sent to, and received back from, Liverpool.——But so far from the situation of London giving it a *preference* with regard to News, it may be recollected that the most important intelligence that ever arrived, came through Liverpool and Bristol ; and the Merchants of London, in the Cotton and Russia Trade, are often exposed to great losses by the local advantages which the Inhabitants of the Western and Eastern ports enjoy in this respect.

The ability and enterprise of these Towns have already suggested the idea that they can, in their corporate and municipal capacity, become the Depositories of Stock, and issue corresponding Stock Debentures without the necessity of applying to the Legislature.

It has been asserted, likewise, that Capital Punishments for Forgeries, through the introduction of Stock Debentures, would be numerous.——Forgeries with respect to Bank Notes seldom occur except in the smaller ones.——A Tradesman never takes even a Fifty Pound Note but from a person of respectability, nor without possessing the means of returning it, if it be a Forgery.——This will apply more forcibly to Debentures, none of which would be of a less amount than £.100 ; and no person would perpetrate such a crime with a certainty of being detected in a few hours ;——besides, the construction of Debentures, by a peculiar invention, will afford the means of detection in every part of the World.

If it is objected, that the Plan would give dying Persons the

opportunity of injuring the Revenue, by a distribution of their Property on their death-beds——I answer, that the same objection now applies to Exchequer Bills, and India Bonds.——The only check on the part of the Government is the Oaths of Administrators, which will equally apply to the case of Debentures; and Deeds of Gift, Settlements, and Powers of Attorney have never been restricted.

Some respectable Stock Brokers have hinted their fears that the wide circulation of Stock Debentures would give rise to much private dealing, and that there would not be that defined and regular Market which at present is established at the Stock Exchange.——I answer, that the traffic in Stock Debentures would so incalculably exceed that of the present Inscriptions in the Bank Books, that there would be the *greater need* for a respectable and determinate resort, where the price would be ascertainable at every moment.——None could be devised so appropriate as the present Stock Exchange; and the known Integrity and Honor of its Members would ensure them the increased Agency.——The advantages which Stock Debentures would inspire, will readily be anticipated by the Stock Exchange, and by all practical Men.——They will be a most material assistance in settling the daily Stock Account, which would resolve itself with the greatest ease by the balancing of the Bankers' Accounts; as Lombard Street would probably contain Twelve Millions of Debentures every evening. I shall be understood, when I say Stock Debentures will be like Scrip, paid in full with the privilege of receiving the Dividends in the manner of India Bonds; the Capitalists are aware of the advantages proposed; and the rise in the Funds of 2 per cent. on the promulgation of the Subject by the Ministerial Journals, indicated the general opinion of the measure.

I should be insulting the good sense of the Country, and the eminent Talents of those who advocate this Plan, if I pretended that Stock Debentures would by their issue *instantly* produce the various advantages I anticipate.——It would be presumptuous to suppose any other Effect than what would result from a *gradual* demand for this eligible transferrable Security, and the *consequent* opinion of their utility which would operate on that demand, and cause an immediate and regular advance in the price; but I challenge any one to point out a single evil that *could* occur, against which I have not provided. An Excess of Capital is completely prevented, by making any Excess a pretext for a Stamp-duty, and thereby producing both a Remedy and an extraordinary benefit.——In fact, the Plan of Debentures would produce that long-wished-for Legislative measure so severely prohibited by Acts of Parliament——that is to say,——a Tax on Funded Property; or in other words,——a Property Tax on that Capital which is the most productive, and liable to no vicissitudes in respect to the Income derived from it.——It would likewise be a self-imposed Tax, which none therefore could complain of, and which every man who is *not* a Stock-Holder *devoutly* wishes.——On the whole, I trust it will be completely evident, that I propose No sudden Transition—No violent Measure—No visionary scheme

of obtaining an incredible advantage, but a safe, gradual introduction of Convenience and Comfort, and the *means* of diffusing general happiness by the removal of Eighteen Millions of Taxes.

As a Subject of Experiment, the Plan of Debentures is of as fearless a nature as would be the question, whether the Speaker should preserve the present form of his State Carriage, or change it for one which was better suited for his accommodation?

Before this reaches the Press, the grand question relative to the return of Cash Payments will be agitated.——I shall not weaken my Subject by connecting it with these Discussions, on which the great men dilate and harass themselves. Perhaps the very Gentlemen who raised the question during the last Session, would have objected to the Bank paying in Specie, if they had been left to their own discretion.——The Bank Directors I expect will soon silence the ignorant abuse heaped upon them, by requesting as a *favor* the opportunity of withdrawing their One and Two Pound Notes from circulation. A modern Cocker may then calculate “what is the Interest of One Pound at 5 per cent. for a year, and the expence of remaking a One Pound Note every month;” the subject of Bank Profits will then be more wisely scrutinised and better understood; and it will be *remembered*, that the Bank of England was the Bridge that lately carried us over the yawning Gulph of Insolvency, into which some of the wisest men in the Kingdom expected we should be precipitated.

As my opponent, Dr. ———, in his Reply to me in a public Journal, has been pleased to characterise ——— the Bank of England as the Sibyl’s Den, and the Funded Property as the State Rookery, which the sooner it leaves ——— not a wreck behind the better;”——

I will ask him——Whether he means to propose, in contradistinction to the present distribution of Property, that the relation of Debtor and Creditor shall entirely cease?——for a Man may owe an Individual Merchant many Thousand Pounds, who has only Funded Property to meet the demand; and another may lately have sold his Stock, and lent his Money to Commissioners for the Construction of a Road; or he may have purchased very largely of an Article, the price of which he *thus* wishes to enhance. Is the latter Gentleman of a description *so worthy*, that he should exclusively be protected in his Possessions, when, according to the Doctor’s views, half the property of the Kingdom would be swept away?——The fact is,——the STOCK Dividends——are mediately——the source of Employment and comfort to Millions of British Subjects, and Trade and Commerce thereby receive a permanent support.——Stock Debentures therefore are not very likely ever to be esteemed, as the Doctor would insinuate, “Dirty Rags, and the representatives of Non-entities;”——and as to the Charge that “Funded Property is usually gotten by Speculators and Gamblers”——it is obvious that Money *hastily* gotten, whether by Commerce or Gambling, may be invested in Land as well as in the Stocks.——The Landed Interest are not *entirely* free from the charge of *risking* their Estates, and it is presumed that they are not *certain* always of winning.——The amount of the Circulating Medium must be preserved at that

Standard which the requirements of Government and of the Country suggest.——Should a restricted issue of Bank Notes be resorted to, or should the payment of Gold by the Bank cause a similar diminution of Country Notes; it would be the path of Wisdom to provide the Empire with such a Medium of circulation as Stock Debentures offer:——and should the Paper System be ultimately EXCLUSIVELY adopted,—this facility of Transfer given to the Public Creditor may preserve and consolidate our domestic, colonial, and foreign relations, and furnish a safe and familiar medium for the extension of our National greatness.

The Funded Proprietors will perhaps consider themselves particularly favored by the present publication; but however desirous I may be of pleasing that opulent body—I disclaim any intention of assisting their interests at the expense of the Community. The Consols may rise to 100, and, in the language of Doctor ———, “*I may have induced all the physical force of the Country to be brought forth in support of the Stocks. The funds may be perpetuated.——Debentures may take flight to every part of the Kingdom; and every British Subject may become a Stock-Holder, and thereby interested to support the Paper System.*”——Yet every British Subject would be eventually benefited by their proportional exoneration from Eighteen Millions of Taxes, and the Government, (or rather the Country at large,) would derive the advantage of a great increase in the amount which would be collected from those Taxes, which would remain, as well as a probable large Receipt from the Stamp-duty, arising from the Debenture Warrants.

The Concession to the Public Creditor of a TRANSFERRABLE Security, instead of an untransferrable one, so far from being in itself a Sacrifice, will prove the most salutary measure that the Trade, Agriculture, Commerce, and Colonies of this Country, ever experienced. If the Nation intended to be faithful to its engagements with the Public Creditor, they cannot object to giving this satisfactory Pledge of what they religiously did intend to fulfil.

A very respectable Journal, during the public discussion of the Plan of Debentures last February, was apprehensive that every favorable notice that was taken of it had a tendency to raise the Stocks; and as the Editors wished to preserve themselves from the most distant charge of Stock-Jobbing, they observed the most inviolable Silence on the Subject.——This circumstance proved a great obstacle to the general diffusion of the nature of my Plan, as well as being personally inconvenient to me: for I could never promote the subject, without at the same time appearing to advocate a Rise in the Stocks. I assure those Gentlemen, I am not in the least interested in the price of Stock.——The probability of the adoption of my Plan by the Legislature, may be estimated by its merits.——To elicit Public opinion during the sitting of Parliament, is the object of this Pamphlet, as in matters of Public Credit, Public opinion must be consulted. Men of Rank, Learning, or Capital, will therefore serve their Country, by transmitting their opinions to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; especially if they are adverse to the Measure;——but I do not here allude to Dr. ———, and the

Radical Reformers, as *they* sarcastically refer the Public Creditor to the Minister who contracted the Debt;—and as the adoption of my Plan will prevent for ever their injuring the Stockholder, it is hoped that the Legislature will speedily avail themselves of its advantages. If the Reformers maintain that the Public Virtue of the Empire is a Plea for Universal Suffrage; let it be remembered that the largest County in England rejected the most popular man with the friends of humanity, because he would not expend his Children's portions in Banqueting and paying the Coach-hire of the Electors.——This is a powerful argument for the continuance of such Boroughs as Bramber,——that an opportunity may be afforded, of introducing those learned and pious Characters into the Commons-house, whom the Freeholders and Municipal Interests have not the independence to elect.

But as contradistinguished from the Radical Reformers, it may be presumed that the Whigs will naturally refer to the opinions of the Earl of Lauderdale: the affability of that Nobleman enables me to form some distant Ideas of his views. I think he will admit that by my Plan, Consols will rise to 100, and that consequently Four Millions per annum would be saved by the reduction of the Four and Five per Cents; and in this case I know not how the inference can be denied me, by Men whose Minds can grasp the SUM OF THINGS,——that the Sinking Fund of Fourteen Millions per annum, would ultimately resolve itself into the Service of the Year!!! But his Lordship has his *education* fears.——John Bull thinks that a One Pound Note ought to be the Representative of a Sovereign that is deposited in the Bank Cellars!——This is an opinion only worthy of the DARK ages, and his Lordship will awake from the soporific habits of his Country.——The question is—Will not Stock Debentures represent a Species of Property universally admitted as the chief Characteristic of Wealth?——If this is not admitted, my Pursuits cease; and it would in this case be honorable in the Legislature, timely to intimate to the Funded Capitalist that his Claim is to be questioned, and that he must gradually prepare himself for a CONFLAGRATION OF THE BANK BOOKS!

The Nation would not increase the amount of their Obligations, by conceding this facility of Transfer;——they are bound to the Public Creditor by the same Authority which compels the Tenant to render to the Landed Proprietor his Rent;——and all correlative obligations will expire with the Authority of Acts of Parliament.

But a dreadful expectancy is held out, in the fear that the Prosperity which the issue of Debentures would create, would beget National Extravagance, and induce our affording Loans for the use “of other Governments.”——These evils I am not called upon to provide against,——the dangers arising from an excess of Health are in general gladly encountered.——The first duty of a Statesman is to promote the easy procurement of common necessities, to every British Subject; that leisure being given, our Countrymen might be placed above mere Animal life, and enjoy the opportunity of exercising the social duties.

The diminution of Taxes, and the increase of Trade and Commerce, will be two grand means of promoting moral Reformation :—— the improvement that would take place in the outward condition of the Poor, by affording Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, would lead to the enjoyment of Substantial Comforts, and render unnecessary to every one, those daring speculations which harass the mind, and destroy the peace of thousands.

Mr. Vansittart's Plan of Deposit Notes was described by the Times Newspaper, as oppressive to the Landed Interest, and like Mr. Law's,——as

“ an interference with the private concerns of Bankers, and a
“ seizure of the advantages which their Property and Credit
“ presented.”

Without joining in this description I may add,——that my Plan proposes the greatest *benefit* to the Landed Interest :—— it virtually augments the Capital of every Banker, by enabling him to use all his floating Cash, while it leaves him in possession of his own Credit and individual pursuits.——It would assist Commerce and our Exchanges.——It would relieve the Colonies from the wretchedness of the want of a circulating medium; and it *prospectively* holds out the removal of at *least* Eighteen Millions of Taxes.

But, on the other hand, if it is thought right to preserve INVIO-LATE the Sinking Fund; the Purchases arising from its accumulating Amount of Fourteen Millions per Annum, *combined* with the demand for Debentures, would so raise the price of Stocks, that there would be not only a reduction of Four Millions of Taxes through the 4 and 5 per Cents., but the Public Annuitants would ultimately accept of Transferrable Securities at a less Interest than even 3 per Cent.——A Circulation of above Thirty Millions of Bank Notes, (which are founded on Private Security and bear no Interest,) has been gratefully received during the temporary permission of the British Parliament; but Stock Debentures would be the Notes of that Parliament *bearing Interest!!*

In fact, the adoption of my Plan would virtually expunge the National Debt; and every evil, which WAR and the Errors of Government may have occasioned, will be wiped away.

I have scrupulously answered every objection that has hitherto been urged against it, from its wide publication in July 1817; since which time Prussia and Denmark have adopted it.——I am careless about its success; because I am *certain*, from the approbation it has received from the BEST INFORMED,——that it *will* prevail.

January, 1819.

WILLIAM DUNN.



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[Dunn, William]

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